

Harmonizing health security across Europe

EPW core priorities and flagships
Protecting against health emergencies

WHO collaboration
Cultivating knowledge exchange
National/subregional/regional
network

In an increasingly interconnected world, the risk of disease outbreaks has surged, driven by factors such as climate change, population density and frequent international travel. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed gaps in global preparedness to manage rapidly spreading diseases. Against this backdrop, the Pan-European Network for Disease Control (NDC) was established in April 2024.

Launched by the Regional Office and the United Kingdom Health Security Agency (UKHSA), the NDC aims to boost preparedness by enabling Member States to share knowledge and identify health risks before they escalate. Its three working groups (collaborative surveillance, emergency coordination and access to countermeasures) have activities underway to monitor and address potential threats. Dame Jenny Harries, Chief Executive of UKHSA, serves as Chair of the NDC Steering Group. Daily management is carried out by the Secretariat, hosted by the WHO European Centre for Preparedness for Humanitarian and Health Emergencies.

The impact

Although a new initiative, the NDC is already improving Europe's ability to respond to health threats. Its early efforts, including information-exchange meetings on avian influenza (H5N1) and mpox, are building a foundation to streamline coordination across the Region, all while reinforcing the United Kingdom's role in shaping health security policies in Europe.

Lessons learned

- Cross-border collaboration is critical for disease surveillance and control.
- Balancing resources among Member States can be challenging.
- Knowledge and insights gained during the global pandemic response must be meaningfully incorporated into future disease prevention initiatives.

Donors and partners

Various public health institutes, ministries of health and subregional entities (all partners); WHO European Centre for Preparedness for Humanitarian and Health Emergencies (donor)



European Region



Dame Jenny Harries at the launch of the Pan-European Network for Disease Control.
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“We are better prepared when we work together. Working in partnership is a crucial aspect of developing a truly global approach to health security.”

Ms Julie van der Woude, Senior Strategy Adviser for Global Strategy, UKHSA, United Kingdom

What's next?

The NDC plans to expand its membership to include more countries and institutions, including academia and civil society. It will continue to focus on enhancing preparedness for health emergencies, with upcoming meetings and activities aimed at implementing a strategic work plan and solidifying its role in Europe's health security framework.